



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

School Committee Minutes 06/14/2011

Approved by School Committee September 22, 2011

*Arlington School Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 14, 2011
7:30 p.m.*

*Arlington High School
School Committee Room, 6th Floor
869 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA ~02476*

Present: Ms. Cindy Starks, Chair, Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Vice Chair, Mr. Judson Pierce, Secretary, Mr. Jeff Thielman, Mr. Joseph Curro, Jr., Ms. Leba Heigham, and Mr. William Hayner.

Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Dr. Wallis Raemer, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Mark Ryder Director of Special Education Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Robert Spiegel, Human Resource Officer, Ms. Siobhan Foley, AEA Representative, Student Representative Ms. Ashley Smith and Ms. Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant.

Absent: Steve Pereira, AAA Representative

Dr. Raemer entered the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Ms. Heigham entered the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Mr. Pierce exited the meeting at 10:30 and returned at 10:40 p.m.

Dr. Raemer exited the meeting at 10:35 and returned at 10:40 pm. and exited at 10:50 p.m.

Ms. Johnson exited the meeting at 10:25 and returned at 10:26 and then exited 10:35 and returned at 10:44 p.m.

Mr. Ryder exited the meeting at 10:50 p.m.

Student Reps and AEA Rep exited the meeting

Ms. Starks opened the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Student Voices –

AHS Quiz Show Team members are Anna Blackman, Siddharth Hiregowdara, Cordelia Brazile, Sam Taylor, Sean Davenport, and Shannon Donnellan. After they explained their experiences of being part of the team the team ran a School Committee Quiz Show the All Geeks vs. the Old Guys, the Old Guys won 50 to 40.

Public Participation (Per File BEDH, Arlington School Committee Policy Manual)

- *Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material.*
- *Issues requiring extensive discussion may be deferred to a future meeting with a ~~~~~ scheduled agenda item.*
- *All remarks will be addressed through the chairperson of the meeting.*

Mr. Michael Levi, SEPAC Co-Chair and parent wants to continue to work with school administration and said he is

frustrated on how process had been going on but looks forward to a new beginning tonight.

Ms. Jerri Newman, parent of a special education student thanked Dr. Bodie for changing her plans tonight and asked the School Committee members to create a joint committee, to develop a proposal for the organization of the Special Education Department to include parents, teachers, professionals, as well as special education administrators and School Committee members. To give this committee a specific charge to develop a proposed structure and job descriptions by a certain date for the School Committee members to review and approve.

Ms. Debra Rose Brillati, parent of 8th grade student, very grateful that Dr. Bodie revised her plan this afternoon, and asked the School Committee to make sure the Superintendent and the Director of Special Education put the children first.

Ms. Peg Callahan, and Ms. Chris Cronin-Tossi represented the Team Chairs of Special Education. Ms Callahan said she endorses the work of the Special Education Department and the programs that are currently in place, Support Learning Centers and alternative programs. Ms. Callahan encourages the Arlington Community, Special Education Department and Dr. Bodie to collaborate and continue to improve our programming.

Ms. Kate Harris, voter and taxpayer appreciates the collaboration over the past few weeks but continued to read her letter to the School Committee members on the disparities in Dr. Bodie's recollection of facts, in perception, and her priorities. Ms. Harris asked the School Committee members to create a joint committee, to develop a proposal for the organization of the Special Education Department to include parents, teachers, professionals, as well as special education administrators and School Committee members. To give this committee a specific charge to develop a proposed structure and job descriptions by a certain date for the School Committee members to review and approve.

Ms. Hilary Rappaport, taxpayer, voters, parent of middle and high school students expressed her concerns with the way decisions were made to close the Thompson School for the next school year and to start earlier than planned. Ms. Rappaport along with 60 other people who signed her document wanted the same equity for the Thompson School as the other new schools in Arlington.

Mr. Len Kardon thanked everyone on the committee with his or her work on the override. Mr. Kardon hoped the override would now stabilize the budget for the next three years. Mr. Kardon is requesting all the add backs, changes and union settlements be put in a complete operating budget for FY 12, not the just the bottom line number the School Committee is prepared to vote on tonight. Mr. Kardon would like the School Committee to direct the Chief Financial Officer to update the Grant numbers, and Circuit Breaker Fund numbers to reflect action at the state and federal levels. Mr. Kardon asked that the committee restore everything that was lost this year and look at all funds in the budget and maximize all of it and to review the savings from closing the Thompson Elementary School and review all positions of the staff and the principal funds that we left open.

Mr. Jim Gascogne, Bishop School parent, spoke on the concerns from parents from both Thompson Elementary and Bishop Elementary that were expressed at a meeting at the home of one parent last week. Mr. Gascogne was happy to hear Dr. Bodie added an additional 5th grade teacher at the Bishop, which will make the class sizes more equitable. Mr. Gascogne urges the administration and the School Committee to add two Teacher Assistants to the Bishop School 5th grade classrooms and to provide space somewhere in town for the Thompson community to call their own.

Mr. Pam DiBona, parent who has been involved with the Thompson Elementary School rebuild and the Tax Override is happy with the rebuild and the override. Ms. DiBona is asking the School Committee members to seek two Teacher Aids for the 5th grades at Bishop and hopes the town will provide space for the Thompson community can hold picnics and plays.

Ms. Leslie Meisman, parent, former elementary and middle teacher, tax payer and voter would like to ask the School Committee to create a joint committee to develop a proposal for the organization of the Special Education Department to include parents, teachers, professionals, as well as special education administrators and School Committee members. To give this committee a specific charge to develop a proposed structure and job descriptions by a certain date for the School Committee members to review and approve. Ms. Meisman also asked the School Committee to review additional plans Dr. Bodie puts forward in the Special Education Department and would like the School Committee to know the importance of the role of SEPAC parents have in the Arlington Public Schools system.
Thompson School

Dr. Bodie said the Owner's Project Manager for the new Thompson School would need to submit the Schematic Design for the new Thompson School to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) by Friday, June 17, 2011 and said she would like the Arlington School Committee to vote to approve and authorize the Schematic Design tonight. Dr. Bodie informed the Committee that the MSBA will meet on July 27th to approve the next phase-design phase.

Ms. Lori Cowles, from HMFH Architects, Inc. presented the new Thompson Elementary School design with site plans, and floor plans for first, second and third floor to the School Committee. The plans included the design to

accommodate 380 students in first through fifth grades and 80 kindergarteners. The total proposed building size is just over 57,000 gross square feet and will include 15 general classrooms, 4 kindergarten classrooms, 1 art classroom, 1 music classroom 1 resource room, 1 speech and language room, 1 OT/PT room, 1 reading suite to accommodate 4 teachers plus storage, 1 ESL room, 1 gymnasium that will be adjoined by a platform for school performances, 1 library, 1 cafeteria with an enlarged kitchen to accommodate school-wide food storage and distribution, 1 administration/health/guidance suite.

Mr. Thielman moved that the Arlington School Committee approves and authorizes the Owner's Project Manager to submit the Schematic Design for the new Thompson School to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) and directs the Chairperson of the Arlington School Committee to sign a letter to the MSBA certifying that the Arlington Public School District has supplied true, complete and accurate information to the MSBA relative to the Thompson School Schematic Design, seconded by Mr. Hayner.
Voted: 7-0

Special Education Plan/End of Year Report ~ M. Ryder

~

Dr. Bodie wanted to acknowledge the work of Mr. Ryder over the past three years, this would be his last School Committee meeting.

Mr. Ryder presented the Special Education plan and End of Year Report to the School Committee members. The goals of the Special Education Department are the following:

- Reduce the need of Out of District Placement by developing in-district programs and services
- Improve instructional intervention strategies and increase professional development to reduce the rate of identified students
- Improve district adherences to regulations and procedural compliances

Mr. Ryder pointed out that Arlington has talented and dedicated teachers and staff and we need to move in the direction to continue efforts to reduce Out of District and secondary eligibility and we should have a Tier IV program and be creative with these plans.

The committee discussed the challenges in budget and space in creating additional Tier IV programs.

Dr. Allison-Ampe said she would have been interested in seeing if the programs we currently have are paying for themselves, which was the hope of the School Committee members when these programs were first being discussed a few years ago. Ms. Johnson said she was the one in charge of knowing the cost of the programs. Ms. Johnson said the collection of the monies the first year had been difficult but continues to make great strides in the collection this year. Dr. Allison-Ampe would like the money in related to the program costs.

Ms. Heigham said she would like to look more in depth with the programs and the costs of these and suggested the Budget Subcommittee, the Chief Financial Officer and the Director of Special Education to continue looking into expanding programs, such as the Tier IV program Mr. Ryder suggested.

Ms. Heigham moved the School Committee refer to the Budget Subcommittee to work in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer to provide an in depth analysis of development of programs to entice Out of District students back into district and to tuition in students in from out side the district, by first meeting in December, seconded by Dr. Allison Ampe
Voted: 7-0

Mr. Curro asked Mr. Ryder what his thoughts would be on if mid year assessment of Special Education programs would be and what recommendation changes would have to be made for students in any of the SLC programs. Mr. Ryder would include parents, special education teachers, and general education teachers and would envision data analysis best practices, seeing trends, consulting with other Special Education Specialist and feedback coming back to February 1,

The committee members thanked Mr. Ryder for his years of service and asked him to forward the goals of the Special Education Department to each of the committee members, for the next school year.

Dr. Bodie thanked Mr. Ryder for the goals he presented and said the goals were that of the School Department and appreciated all he has done with the programs over the past three years.

Special Education Organization

Dr. Bodie said she will continue to research how she wants to organize the Special Education Department and in late fall will let the committee know her timeline and will move forward in the search in December.

Mr. Hayner asked about the process, and Dr. Bodie said a committee would be formed as has done in the past.

Dr. Bodie presented her proposed structure for Special Education Department with a Director of Special Education, Assistant Special Education Director, Interim Coordinators at Elementary and Secondary level supported by Team Chairs.

Mr. Hayner asked Dr. Bodie the following questions, who would be doing Evaluations, is there job descriptions for Director, Assistant Director and Coordinators, and the cost of the changes. Dr. Bodie responded that the Coordinators would be doing evaluations, all positions presented have job descriptions, and the Unit A teachers will now move into AAA and no cost increase has occurred with the changes.

Ms. Heigham asked who would be coordinating Out of District Students. Mr. Ryder said the caseload would be divided by grade level.

Mr. Curro moved to direct the District Accountability/Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment subcommittee to work with the Administration and SEPAC to develop a recommended process for the selection of permanent leadership for the Special Education Department, to vet job descriptions, and to develop associated goals and objectives as part of the District goal-setting process, based on a timeline to be reported by the subcommittee at the first regular School Committee meeting of October, seconded by Mr. Thielman.

Voted:~ 5- 2, motion passes, Ms. Heigham, and Dr. Allison-Ampe voting No

The committee discussed the process of selecting a permanent leadership for Special Education. Dr. Allison-Ampe had contacted the town legal counsel and said the School Committee has the legal authority to hire but no legal authority to fire or to evaluate. After the committee asked Dr. Bodie for her opinion on the motion. Dr. Bodie agreed research needs to be done, and receiving information on models, and superintendents input, then taking on decisions on a model. Dr. Bodie said a need for new job descriptions may be or not needed. Dr. Bodie said she will continue to receive information on the have this all completed by November.

Mr. Curro is underscoring the role of the District Accountability/ Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Subcommittee on the selection process of permanent leadership for Special Education, and wants a joint meeting with this subcommittee, SEPAC and the administration before Dr. Bodie moves forward.

Ms. Heigham suggested leadership and job descriptions to be moved to Policies and Procedures and would like the motion separated.

Mr. Hayner sees the motion as positive motion as a whole, and will support the motion.

Dr. Allison-Ampe cannot support the motion as a whole.

Dr. Bodie introduced Ms. Kathleen Kelley Lockyer and stated her professional experience. Dr. Bodie is recommending Ms. Lockyer to the position of Interim Director of Special Education.

Ms. Lockyer spoke and said would like to sustain and hold on to the programs Arlington currently has and will work collaboratively with everyone involved. Ms. Lockyer will continue to look at the scope of priorities in the Special Education Department and because she has fulfilled the position before in Watertown she is accepting the role of Interim Director of Special Education in Arlington.

Mr. Thielman moved approve Dr. Bodie's recommendation to hire Ms. Kathleen Lockyer, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Thielman moved to table all agenda items up until 30 –50 Mill Street, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 7-0

Ms. Starks said that the Counsel for WP East, the developer for the Brigham's property (30-50 Mill Street) has requested permission for the developer to conduct work on the Town-owned "pocket park:" abutting Mill Brook Drive.

The School Committee voted to grant permission for this work because it is under the jurisdiction of the School Department but the vote needs to grant permission to the developer, not the Planning Department. Town Counsel, Ms. Juliana Rice has reviewed all the documents, as has Wood Partners.

Ms. Heigham moved

(1) Temporary permission is hereby granted to SP5 Wood Alta Mill Street LLC and its agents to access the Mill Brook Drive Park to perform the work described in Special Conditions 13 and 14 to the December 13, 2010, Special Permit Decision of the Arlington Redevelopment Board on Docket No. 3386 in accordance with the conditions set forth in the Temporary Construction License Agreement between the Town of Arlington and SP5 Wood Alta Mill Street LLC and

- **The Committee Chair is hereby authorized to sign the Temporary Construction License Agreement between the Town of Arlington and SP5 Wood Alta Mill Street LLC on behalf of this Committee.**

Seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Thielman moved to take all items tabled off the table, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Curro moved the 11 o'clock rule to 11:15 p.m., seconded by Mr. Thielman.

Voted: 7-0

FY 12 Budget

Dr. Bodie thanked everyone who voted for the override. Dr. Bodie said we will have all services that we have now we will have for next year and said the money received will help reduce athletic fees by \$100,000. The athletic fees for 2011-2012 will be presented at the next School Committee meeting, June 28, 2011 for the School Committee members to vote on so fees can be collected in August 2012. Dr. Bodie reviewed the many areas she will continue to look over and expand offerings to

Ms. Johnson said due to staffing and budget implications over the summer she will have the FY 12 budget in the fall. Ms. Johnson would like the committee to vote to affirm the School Committee bottom line number. Dr. Bodie said due putting program offering on hold until the override was voted; we have put things on hold. Mr. Hayner asked Ms. Johnson to show the savings of early retirements versus hiring new teachers. Mr. Curro is uncomfortable voting a bottom line number without seeing each budget line item. Mr. Curro said per policy, the budget

The committee members would like to discuss the level services budget at the next meeting, because the level service budget for FY 12 was not voted.

The committee members will bring their budget books.

After the committee members discussed the budget, salary increases, current level services budget and when the committee would receive the detail budget for FY 12, the following motion was made:

Mr. Thielman moved to affirm the School Committee Budget of \$47,790,251, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 6-0-1, Mr. Hayner abstained.

Ms. Starks said the School Committee would receive the detail FY 12 Budget first meeting in the fall.

Dr. Allison-Ampe moved the 11 o'clock rule to 11:30 p.m., seconded by Mr. Pierce.

Voted: 7-0

FY 11 Budget

Ms. Johnson said we are in good shape with FY 11 Budget and with Circuit Breaker and maintaining Out of District Reserves, and we have collected all money owed to Arlington Public Schools.

Dr. Allison-Ampe moved that the School Committee authorize the Budget Subcommittee, in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officers, and /or the Chair of the Budget Subcommittee to work with the Finance Committee, or a subcommittee thereof, to determine the optimum amount to keep in reserve intended for

extraordinary expenses related to Special Education, and the use of the reserve, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 7-0

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bodie presented her Press Release dated June 14, 2011 announcing Arlington High School will host a Mandarin teacher from China for the 2011-2012 school year.

Dr. Bodie said she would meet again next Monday, June 20th to discuss relocation issues with Thompson Elementary School parents, and Bishop Elementary School parents. Ms. Johnson is looking into information on portables.

Mr. Hayner thanked the Superintendent, School Committee Chair and staff on the graduation held last Sunday.

Mr. Pierce moved the 11 o'clock rule to 11:45 p.m., seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

Suspended policies

JCA - Open enrollment

Mr. Pierce said we still have suspended policy JCA – Open enrollment but would like to make the following motion:

Mr. Pierce moved to direct the Superintendent to keep the suspension of paragraph three of policy JCA and to add applications are due by Friday, August 5th, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Pierce moved to give authority to Superintendent or her designee to look at applications for open enrollment and if to equalize class size and give authority to Superintendent or her designee authority to grant Open Enrollment requests, in order to relieve class size in the sending school and/or to support more equitable class size in the district, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 7-0

Policy & Procedures

Mr. Pierce did a first reading of the following policies:

- DBJ - first reading
- CBI - first reading
- CBI-E - first reading

Mr. Pierce informed the School Committee that Attorney Valerio agrees with all changes, to the revisions of policies CBI and CBI-E and he said the Superintendent's Evaluation will be done in open session and the minutes will serve as the evaluation.

The committee continued the discussions on the dates that should be included in the CBI Policy and that a self-evaluation is to be done by Dr. Bodie. The committee discussed the open meeting laws and the responsibilities this will have with the committee member's written notes and verbal notes on the Superintendents Evaluation.

The committee agreed to add budget line item *Reserves to the DBJ Budget Transfer policies and change the date of approval on all three policies to read June 28, 2011 instead of July 28, 2011.

The committee could not agree on specific dates within the Superintendents Evaluation policy, therefore, it was suggested to direct the Policies and Subcommittee members to meet again to continue the review and update changes to the policy.

Ms. Heigham moved the 11 o'clock rule to 12:00 p.m., seconded by Ms. Starks.

Voted: 5-2, Mr. Curro and Mr. Thielman voting No

Consent Agenda - All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. ~There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

*Approval of Warrant # 11160 Total Warrant Amount \$561,278.86 dated May 24, 2011

*Approval of Regular School Committee meeting minutes: ~None

**Mr. Hayner moved to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Ms. Heigham.
Voted: 7-0**

Secretary's Report

**Mr. Curro moved to table the Secretary's Report to next meeting, June 28, 2011, seconded by Mr. Hayner.
Voted: 7-0**

Committee & Appointee Reports

**Ms. Heigham moved to approve School Committee meeting on Tuesday, June 28, 2011, seconded by Mr. Hayner.
Voted: 7-0**

**Ms. Heigham moved to approve the School Committee / Superintendent Retreat for Wednesday, June 29, 2011, location TBD, seconded by Mr. Hayner.
Voted: 7-0**

Ms. Heigham thanked Principal Silvestre who was the Interim Principal at the Bishop School and on the 5th grade Recognition that was held tonight.

Executive Session

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel.

None

Adjournment

**Mr. Curro voted to adjourn at 11:55 p.m, seconded by Mr. Thielman.
Voted: 7-0**

Respectfully submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/jp